



NEWS RELEASE

United States Department of Agriculture
NATIONAL AGRICULTURAL STATISTICS SERVICE
COLORADO FIELD OFFICE

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2008 ORGANIC PRODUCTION SURVEY RESULTS AVAILABLE

DENVER, COLORADO – The U.S. Department of Agriculture's National Agricultural Statistics Service (NASS) has released the results of the 2008 Organic Production Survey. "This, the first ever National Organic Production Survey came in direct response to the growing interest in organics among consumers, farmers, businesses and others," said Bill Meyer, director of the Colorado Field Office of USDA's National Agricultural Statistics Service (NASS). "This was an opportunity for organic producers to share their voices and help ensure the continued growth and sustainability of organic farming in the United States."

Listed below are some examples of Colorado information from the 2008 Organic Production Survey:

There were 220 certified organic farms in Colorado during 2008 with an average size of 700 acres. This includes farms that were exempt from certification. Thirty-four percent of these farms have been in organic agricultural production for less than 10 years. The term organic refers to any commodity produced according to the National Organic Program standards. To be exempt from certification a farm must follow these standards and have less than \$5,000 in annual sales.

The total value of organic product sales from certified and exempt farms in Colorado was \$70.2 million. Crops, including nursery and greenhouse made up 54% of this value. Total organic production expenses were \$61.7 million, an average of \$283,040 per farm.

Twenty-eight percent of first point sales from certified and exempt farms were done locally (within 100 miles of the farm), while 47% were done nationally.

Colorado certified and exempt farms harvested 13,711 acres of organic dry hay for a total quantity of 41,830 tons. The state accounts for 23,179 acres of harvested organic winter wheat for grain or seed with a total quantity of 553,443 bushels.

The peak inventory of organic beef cows on certified and exempt farms in 2008 was 973 head, while the all other organic cattle and calves peak number was 4,630 head.

More Colorado and National statistics are available online. Visit the web site at: www.agcensus.usda.gov. For more information, call the NASS Colorado Field Office at (800) 392-3202.

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